

PSC-ED-OUS

Moderator: Emmanuel Caudillo
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1:00 pm CT

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. At this time, all participants are in a listen-only mode. During the Q&A session, star 1 on your touchtone phone if you would like to ask a question. Today's conference is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time.

Now, I'd like turn the meeting over to, Ms. Alejandra Ceja. You may begin.

Alejandra Ceja: Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Alejandra Ceja, the Executive Director of the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics. Thank you all for joining us this afternoon for today's webinar. Before we begin, I'd like to inform and remind you that this webinar is off the record and not intended for press purposes.

I would also like to let you know that this webinar including the Q&A will be recorded and the recording and transcript along with the slide presentation will be posted to our Web site after the call. If you know of anyone who wasn't able to join us for the live webinar and would benefit from the information that's going to be shared today, please direct them to our Web site.

The agenda is going to proceed as follows. I will describe today's webinar topic briefly and then I'll introduce our first presenter who will have the opportunity to speak for up to 15 minutes followed by 15 minutes of Q&A. I will then introduce our second presenter who will also speak for up to 15 minutes and we will then open the floor again for Q&A for the remainder of the hour.

When we open the floor for questions, the operator will come on to provide guidance on how to get into the queue for questions. So without further ado, let's get started on our discussion which is focused on Hispanic families in special education. There are approximately 1.3 million Hispanics who received early intervention in special education services.

Today, we will have the opportunity to hear about the administration's efforts to meet the needs and develop the full potential of children with disabilities. In particular how Hispanic families can become more knowledgeable about special education and their rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, IDEA so that they can better advocate for their children.

And the second half of the webinar, we will learn about some of the efforts on the ground to empower parents to get the support services that they and their children need to be successful. So I will now turn it over to our first presenter, Mr. David Emenheiser, who is a project officer in the Office of Special Education in Rehabilitative Services here at the Department of Education. David.

David Emenheiser: Well thank you and good afternoon. Yes, my name is David Emenheiser and I do work at the Office of Special Education Program here at the Department of Ed and I manage some grants with non-profits who provide

training and information to families of children with disabilities and today I'm going to focus on special education and how to support Hispanic families whose children receives special education and early intervention services.

Next slide, please. You know, as the slides states, approximately 7 million from birth through 21 receive early intervention and special education services in the United States each year and I'm going to discuss the difference between early intervention and special education services in the later slide.

Disability is a natural part of the human condition and children with disabilities are found in every race, ethnicity and socioeconomic class and of those children with disabilities receiving services in the United States, almost 1.3 million are Hispanic. The percentage of children with disabilities who are Hispanic is slightly smaller than the percentage of all children who are Hispanic.

We know that there is significant achievement gap between students with disabilities and students without disabilities regardless of ethnicity. There's also an achievement gap between Hispanic students and all students and in spite of getting services to help them grow and learn about a quarter of all Hispanic students with disabilities drop out of school and only about half receive a regular high school diploma.

Hispanic students with disabilities face significant challenges to achieving their full potential. Helping students learn how to advocate for their children with disabilities and in turn help them help their children advocate for themselves is one piece of improving education outcomes for Hispanic students with disabilities. Next slide.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or IDEA is the law that governs how children with disabilities receive services to help them grow and learn. The purpose of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act is to provide children with disabilities with a high quality education and supports to prepare them to live as productive and independent lives as they possibly can.

Until 1974, when the precursor to IDEA became law, children with disabilities did not have to be taught in public schools and having high expectations for children with disabilities is crucial to providing proper support and a quality education. Family engagement is an important piece of an IDEA. As you can see in this quote from the finding section of the law, research shows that engaged families are their children's best advocates often searching out information and opportunities that can significantly improve outcomes for their children.

We can help parents have high expectations for their children by strengthening their role and responsibilities for their children's education and by helping them meaningfully participate in education. Next slide.

IDEA also recognizes the importance of providing support and services to families from the moment the child with a disability is born. Early intervention services provide services to children from birth to 3 through the individualized family service plan and inter-agency coordination. Notice that it's a family service plan because you can't help infants and toddlers without supporting their families.

Special education services are provided through an Individualized Education Program or IEP for school age children. Both IFSPs and IEPs are meant to be individualized targeting - targeted to the needs and to the strength of that particular child. In order for an infant and toddler to receive early intervention

services, the child must meet the eligibility criteria established in IDEA and by their state.

And services to help an eligible infant or toddler must be provided in the child's natural environment that is the place for the child would be if he or she didn't have a disability. What that means is that for most infants and toddlers, services are provided in the home or a child care setting. In order to be found eligible for special education services, a child must be classified as a child with a disability under at least 1 of 13 disability categories and be found to need special education services.

Limited English proficiency cannot be the determining factor to find the child eligible for special education and services must be delivered in the least restrictive environment which is defined in the law as to the maximum extent appropriate children with disabilities including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities are educated with children who are not disabled.

With early intervention and special education are complex systems with complex procedures and safe guards to protect children and families. All families need information and training to navigate these systems but cultural and linguistic differences and immigration status may make the need for information and training more acute for some Hispanic families. Next slide.

IDEA lays out a series of steps to follow from the moment that a disability is suspected to when a child stops receiving special education services. Family engagement is emphasized throughout these steps beginning from when the child is first identified and referred to services through evaluation, determining if the child is eligible for services, the development of the individualized family service plan and the individualize education program,

decisions regarding how and where the child will receive services and planning for transition after IDEA services end.

IDEA also stresses the importance of having children with disabilities learn and grow alongside their non-disabled peers. Families are informed and involved in their children's growth and learning - families that are involved and informed of their child's growth and learning connect their children with disabilities to the wider community hoping that children transition from home to school and from school to post secondary education employment and independent living.

Evidence-based practices in providing early intervention and special education services address the need for systematic multilevel approach to family engagement -- an approach that is based on family strengths and trust and respect between professionals and families. Such an approach must value family's (unintelligible) skills and knowledge regardless of their educational socioeconomic linguistic or cultural background.

They must provide information, education and training to both families and professionals for improved engagement and partnership. They must create multiple opportunities for engagement. Keeping these principles in mind is necessarily when working with Hispanic families particularly those families whose primary language is not English.

Professionals need to be attentive, to not only the challenges that the family bring with them but also their significant strengths. By engaging families in meaningful and culturally appropriate ways, Hispanic families can be empowered to exercise their rights and advocate successfully for their children and their needs. Next slide.

Another important aspect of IDEA is the requirement that families received important information their native language. Key information includes notices of meetings, the notice of proposed changes to services and evaluation or reevaluation information.

Parents can provide informed consent to having their child evaluated or receive services or any other changes only if they have the knowledge they need to provide that consent. The law also requires that a school or agency take whatever action is necessary to ensure that the parent understands the proceedings of the IEPT meeting including providing interpreters for families whose language is not English.

Spanish-speaking parents need to feel empowered to ask for an interpreter to help them actively participate in making decisions for their children. Because special education and early intervention have a language of their own, the Office of Special Education Programs work with the grantee to statewide parent advocacy network in New Jersey to develop a glossary of terms to help translators translate words most commonly used in early intervention and special education into Spanish in a way that could be understood by Spanish speaking parents from a variety of Latin American countries.

The terms were tested by focus groups of diverse Spanish-speaking parents before inclusion in the glossary. While at times the words are not standard Spanish -- Spanglish if you will -- they are understandable by almost all Spanish-speaking families. There's one caveat. The glossary does not provide legal definitions for the terms nor explain the terms but can be useful in providing consistent translations.

We hope that as the glossary is used by more and more translators, families who move from one area to another can be exposed to consistent language

wherever they are. The glossary is not enough to train or educate Spanish speaking families of their rights under IDEA and effective education practices.

Most of the terms require OSEP also funded at least one parent training in information center for families of children with disabilities in every state -- DC, The Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. These centers must provide information and training to families who contact them including families who suspect that their children have a disability or whose child may have been inappropriately identified as a child with a disability.

All Parent Training and Information Centers must have plans in place to provide information for parents who don't speak English and must provide services to families regardless of their education levels or immigration status. Most Parent Training and Information Centers have at least one staff member who speaks Spanish.

In addition, 30 Community Parent Resource Centers throughout the country have targeted communities where parents are unserved or underserved because of many factors including race and ethnicity. Ten of those centers serve predominantly Hispanic neighborhoods. We will be hearing from one of those in the last half of this presentation. Next slide.

The Office of Special Education Services also funds the Center for Parent Information and Resources, a national center that serves as a one-stop shop, if you will, for families looking for resources on special education and also looking for the Parent Training and Information Center or Community Parent Resource Center in their area.

The center's Web site is at www.parentcenterhub.org and you can see their homepage here. The graphic shows the homepage of the Center for Parent Information and Resources and in the middle of the page is a picture of a child kissing his mother. Next to that picture is the text that says featured resource. A rivet on the top and text and pictures on the bottom link - on the bottom linked to the resources on the site.

A listing of parents centers and a listing for the parent technical assistance centers. A search box is in the right hand of the picture as are the links to Facebook and Twitter. So you can see there at the bottom that there is the link to the finding a parent center in your area.

Following the link to the resources leads to a page with many links to disability and education topics and in addition topics in Spanish are listed in Spanish. As of now, the Web site has about 112 resources in Spanish for families. Another link is to a listing of the states Parent Training and Information Centers and the Community Parent Resource Centers to connect families to their state and local resources. If you work with Hispanic families, I recommend that you bookmark the - this page since it contains a wealth of information. Next slide.

And I appreciate this opportunity to connect with all of you and spread the word about the resources the department has to help families of children with disability including Hispanic families and this is my contact information and I believe now if there are any questions.

Alejandra Ceja: Yes. Operator, can you please tell callers how to get in the queue to ask any question. David, thank you so much for that great overview.

Coordinator: Thank you. At this time, we'll begin the question and answer session. To ask a question, you may please press star 1 on your touchtone phone. Please unmute your phone and record your first and last name clearly when prompted. To withdraw your question, please press star 2. Once again, if you would like to ask a question, please press star 1 and record your name.

One moment please for our first question.

Alejandra Ceja: Operator, do we have any questions in the queue?

Coordinator: There are no questions in queue at this time.

Alejandra Ceja: Okay. David, I do have a question. I would - are there any grant opportunities that you know are coming down, new grant opportunities that would be available in this fiscal year?

David Emenheiser: The current grant closed and so we're completing the Parent Training and Information. Half of the state's Parent Training and Information Centers are completed this year. The other half will be completed next year -- the following year -- so that would be 2016. We project that we will be re-computing the Centers for Parent Resources - Community Parent Resource Centers so the CPRC which is what we're going to hear about in just a moment.

These are the smaller projects that really focus in on a particular geographic population.

Alejandra Ceja: Okay. Great. Operator, if there are no questions in the queue, we will turn it over to our second presenter.

Coordinator: Yes. There are no questions.

Alejandra Ceja: Okay. Great. We - if you - for those of you on the phone, if you do have a question for David, please feel free to send us - send it to us. You can do so at the same email address that you use to register for this webinar, whieeh@ed.gov and we will make sure to forward it to him.

Our second presenter is -

((Crosstalk))

Coordinator: Excuse me. We actually we do have one question coming into queue. One moment, please.

Alejandra Ceja: Okay.

Coordinator: Our first question comes from Ms. (Henny Beige). Your line is now open.

(Henny Beige): Thank you. Can you take questions from Oklahoma?

Alejandra Ceja: Yes.

David Emenheiser: Certainly.

(Henny Beige): Okay. Here in Oklahoma, I'm a special Ed teacher here and I would say that 1/3 of our ELL students are not receiving the ELL services that they're supposed to receive which makes it really hard for us to focus on whether or not they need special education because they're not getting the language assistance that they need.

So where do we start?

David Emenheiser: Well that is, you know, as I said, it is - English language acquisition is not a reason for special education services so it definitely does sound like maybe in your area that there is some work to be done to make sure that there are appropriate services for the English-language learners prior to or maybe in conjunction with any specialized education services that would be occurring as well.

One - I can definitely could have a conversation with you in more detail off line about what specifically your concerns are and what things we can address with that but I think that the main point is that there - if there's any individual students - you said that you are a teacher who's teaching in this area. So is there any way that you can be working within your system to help your system understand the need for English language services making sure that parents are aware of their rights in terms of evaluation and reevaluation.

If they are Spanish-speaking families they do have the right to have interpreters so that they really can understand what the proceedings of the school meetings, you know, mean for them and they can make those informed decisions. So those would be the first steps but if there's more specific information, I'm more than willing to have that conversation with you.

(Henny Beige): Okay. I'd like to talk with you offline at some point. Well I've done everything I can do but it's a huge problem here in Oklahoma.

David Emenheiser: Okay. You have my information on the slide?

(Henny Beige): No. I can't see it. I'm only hearing.

David Emenheiser: Oh. My office number is 202-245-7556.

(Henny Beige): Thank you.

((Crosstalk))

Alejandra Ceja: Thank you for that question. We'll turn it over now to our second presenter, Ms. Lauren Bustos-Alban who is the advocacy and training manager at Parent to Parent in Miami. Lauren.

Lauren Bustos-Alban: Thank you. Could you switch the slide - there we go. Let's just go next slide again. Okay. So I am here to talk a little bit about what the parent centers do especially ours here at Parent to Parent of Miami and as David said before me, there are 30 Community Parent Resource Centers nationwide. Parent to Parent of Miami was actually one of the first 10 of the CPRCs to be funded in 1988.

And we serve both Miami-Dade and Monroe County here. Also important to say that, you know, in 2004, we secured additional funding from the children's trust to better serve our community. Now, in Miami-Dade alone, there are over 37,000 students with disabilities and our center receives over 1400 calls a year easily.

Now, half of these calls are from new families seeking assistance for the very first time and the other half are ongoing families because you have to keep in mind that our cases never close here at our center. Now 72% of the families we serve here in Dade and Monroe are Hispanic and half of those families are of the limited English proficiency. Now, we also serve all ages from 0 and over 22.

Now, about 51% of the families that we serve are between the ages of 6 and 14. Then, about 25 - a little less than 25% between the ages of 3 to 5. Then we have 13.65% of all those families between the ages of 15 to 22 and then 0 to 2 years is about 8.3% of the families that we serve right now. Next slide, please.

Now, the number 1 request for support is usually related to school issues and the second major request is help with services. Now, the most common issues are evaluation. Now regarding the evaluations, it's the request for an evaluation with the timelines in regards to the evaluation where the process is and then results either obtaining copy of results or understanding the results of an evaluation whether it's initial or reevaluation.

Now, we have issues with behavior and that usually covers families (unintelligible) regards to suspensions, (unintelligible) and services and supports in regards to dealing with behavior. Educational placement is another one. This goes to lease restricted environment, inclusion and supplementary aids and services, big issue.

Then, we have laws and regulations and that basically refers to the provision of FAPE or Free and Appropriate Public Education. There's transition and that goes from early intervention K through 12 and then college and career readiness. We have navigating the legal health and social support systems and these are issues that have to do with Medicaid, SSI, med waiver and financial planning for their children.

Employment and independent living which is growing in our community, the interest in wanting to support those areas and then we have charter schools and school of choice options such as the McKay scholarship. Next slide, please.

Now, based on our 2012, 2013 annual report, we alone had over 700 parents attend trainings and over 70% of these families were Hispanic here. We provided advocacy at 65 IEP meetings of which 80% were Hispanic families who could not advocate on their own at these meetings. We also help 50 face-to-face meetings. Thirty-nine of these meetings which supports Hispanic families with various issues including transition, educational issues related to IDA like evaluation, eligibility, placement behavior. We reviewed IPs, 504 plan and develop action plans during these meetings.

We (unintelligible) to provide one-on-one coaching on an ongoing basis. We do this in an effort to prepare Hispanic families to advocate in their native language. We also help the families (unintelligible) various local and state and national resources depending on the need and considering which of this will also provide information in Spanish for these families.

Now, the Hispanic families serve at the parent's centers. Usually, we'll have access to certain resources such as the Spanish glossary that David spoke about that translates the terms of IDA, the parent center hub as well that serves to host information and also connect the families to the different parent centers funded by OSEP and as parents move from one state to another, they're able to find the support and the resources that they need.

The hub also serves as a technical assistance site for parent centers. They are looking for information in Spanish for the families that they're serving. Also, there's connection to APD which is the Agency for Persons with Disabilities for the med waiver. Project 10 is another one and this is for transition. We have things like the CDC, Center for Disease and Control prevention from 0 to 5, early steps help me grow which is early detection for at-risk children. The Early Learning Coalition which also serves children from 0 to 5 and other things like (unintelligible) and local resources here.

Next slide, please. Let's talk a little bit about the challenges. Now, our challenge are - probably our biggest challenge is in serving the Hispanic population here at our center is that the support has to be more individualized. It's more of a one-on-one due to the language barrier. Another big issue for us is providing guidance to families in regards to a foreign educational system that they're just not familiar with and that becomes a huge barrier for them because they have to start by understanding it and then learning to advocate regardless of the language barrier.

Another issue that we also struggle with is the lack of supplemental services provided in the native language. That's always a struggle looking for information services and support so that they're able to communicate and advocate for their children.

Now, we also have challenges that are faced by the Hispanic families that we serve. They're unfamiliar with the educational system. They don't understand it and they have a certain, I would say, a certain minor fear intimidation of, you know, challenging the school. They have never advocated at the school level so that's an issue. They may not be able to help their children with the basics of reading and math due to language barriers.

Lots of our families with very long hours and they just don't have the time to work with their children. Parent involvement needs to be looked at from a realistic point of view how can they truly support and help their child and their school, how they can be involve and of course immigration status which is a big barrier for a lot of families for fear of any consequence or standing up or, you know, or standing out in any way and how this would affect them. Next slide, please.

So the impact. We measure impact of our services using a parenting skills checklist. It's an evaluation tool that's been designed by Parent to Parent of Miami and we use it to guide our staff in developing, you know, an action plan based on information support and the trainings that each new family that contacts Parent to Parent may need, okay. And we use the parenting skill checklist as a monitoring tool.

Now, the tool is based on seven outcomes that are directly linked to IDA. Now, it's in relation to disability, resources, peer support, faith and parent involvement. Now, the goal is to help the families increase their knowledge in one or more of the areas that we like and the seven outcomes by a 90-day followup that we do from their initial call and that's basically how it works for us and how we're able to monitor and what we notice is that, well, of course, Hispanic families who have limited English proficiency do increase their advocacy skills and they do it in their native language by these 90 days.

And that parents increase social support after contacting us. They attend IP meetings and they report having better outcomes at this meeting and parents also report that they were able to advocate more effectively during the meeting and they felt more empowered after this. Next slide, please.

So our best practices. Let me explain that a little. Calls, the calls that come in, they are transferred directly to an education and support specialist as they come in. Now, the education and support specialist themselves are parents of children with disabilities and they provide individualized information and support to the families. We complete the parenting skills checklist to help us guide the assistance that we provide to first-time callers.

We may also complete a SEAP. This is a special education action plan for families who have ongoing need for support that's related to IDA. We have at

least a minimum of four contacts with families before doing a 90-day followup. We schedule face-to-face meetings when communication over the phone is just not being productive or in an emergency situations. We provide remote advocacy and coaching to families during IEP meetings when needed via conference call.

We limit our IEP work groups to two families when they do not speak English and the system and developing an action plan in their native language so that they can attend the meetings. Our workshops are available during the week both morning and evening and on Saturdays for families and our Web site and our online training center also serves as an additional resource of support before meetings for families and it's an English and Spanish. Everything is available. Next slide, please.

So last is lessons learned and lessons for us has been, you know, that parent involvement is crucial to the well being and the educational success of every child regardless of (unintelligible) the parents are able, you know, to master the English language or not. Their involvement still is crucial and we should know that it help them and support the in being more involved.

We've also learned to not assume, do not assume anything. Do not assume that because parents are limited English proficiency, they will not be able to be involved and advocate and support their children. The majority of educators and parents are not well-versed on special education laws, disability and best practices and we make a huge effort in educating, supporting and getting the information out to families and last, collaboration is key at all levels and considering the success in well being of every child within our community.

My contact information is right there and if there's any questions, I'd be more than happy to answer.

Alejandra Ceja: Thank you, Lauren. Operator, can you please open the - let us know if there's any folks on the queue for questions?

Coordinator: Yes. Once again if you would like to ask a question, please press star 1 and record your name. One moment please. Our first question comes from Ms. (Julie Abisot). Your line is now open.

(Julie Abisot): Hello.

Lauren Bustos-Alban: Yes.

(Julie Abisot): Yes. I was calling from Tucson ((Foreign Language Spoken 00:35:40)) here in Tucson, Arizona. And the Parent to Parent, it sounds so wonderful but is it only located in Miami and what do you recommend here in Tucson?

Lauren Bustos-Alban: Yes. Parent to parent in Miami is only located here in Miami. That doesn't mean that you couldn't contact us and that we couldn't, you know, help you in any way possible that we can whether with guidance or information. What do I recommend with - I would recommend I guess, you know, the same thing that you begin. You somehow, you know, a parent center where parents can actually call and that you can have. Even if it's a small group of people at the beginning that can provide them information and guidance or at least link them with the right resources or whatever PTI you have in your area.

(Julie Abisot): Okay.

Lauren Bustos-Alban: Are you familiar with your PTI?

(Julie Abisot): Yes. We're just - we have two charter high school. So it's a little different. I'm understanding from your presentation that you work mostly with elementary student?

Lauren Bustos-Alban: No.

(Julie Abisot): You work...

((Crosstalk))

Lauren Bustos-Alban: We work from 0 to over 22. Adults and children.

(Julie Abisot): Okay. Well this is helpful. Thank you.

Lauren Bustos-Alban: You're welcome.

Alejandra Ceja: Lauren, are there resources on your Web site that we could also direct folks to get more information on any...

Lauren Bustos-Alban: Yes, you can. We have - on our Web site, you'll find resources in regards to everything, from 0 to adults, youth -- anything that have to do with transition with employment, career readiness, the different resources and links that they can, you know...

Woman: Link to the hub.

Lauren Bustos-Alban: Uh-huh, and the link to the hub, yes. Of course, it's there too.

Alejandra Ceja: Great. Operator, do we have any other questions in the queue?

Coordinator: Yes. Our next question comes from Ms. Andrea Pearce. Your line is now open.

Andrea Pearce: Hi. Good morning.

Lauren Bustos-Alban: Good morning. Good afternoon.

Andrea Pearce: Good afternoon over there. Yes. We're in California. Yes. I'm from Rowell Family Empowerment and we're a parenting information center serving 26 counties in the (unintelligible) world far northern California and I just have a question regarding the parent skills checklist and IEP work group. So you just talked a little bit about what kind of questions do you (unintelligible) in the parent skills checklist and do you have a script and for the IEP work group, what does they look like? What do you talk about? I'm not really sure how...

Lauren Bustos-Alban: Okay. It's based on seven points, to be exact. It's seven areas that we look at. Okay. The first one is the parent's knowledge in regards to the child's disability. That's the first thing that we want to measure, all right. Then, we look at what linkages they have already. What resources are available in their community and are they already knowledgeable about them and are they getting these resources?

Then we look at peer support. What's their support system? Who's helping them? Who's guiding them? Who supports them or are they are doing this on their own. Then we measure their knowledge about IDA or 504, okay. And where they're at with that? What is their school involvement? What is the home environment like? And how much do they know about legislative issues and policy and involvement with change? And those are the things that we look at.

Now, we have a scale. It goes from 1 to 5. In between this, we also have certain guidelines for each one of those areas in which we review to be able to then decide if this family is 1 or a 5, 1 being least knowledgeable, 5 being most. So there is, in fact, certain things that we're looking at and being able to say if this person really has, you know, this point down or not and then in the 90 days, we decide what are the areas that the family most need help in and that's what we work with, with the family so that we could move them along and they can move on the scale in these areas.

Now, remember I said that our families always ongoing so we consider the parenting skills check list and we review it as long as the family's involved with us and helping them (unintelligible) move in the different areas. Was that helpful?

Andrea Pearce: Yes, very helpful. Thank you.

Lauren Bustos-Alban: Okay. Now, as far as the IEP work group goes, we will sit down the review the IEP document with the family. Now, we have an advantage here in Miami-Dade that the IEP has already been translated to Spanish which helps the family, you know, have a better understanding of the information in the document but before that happened, we would translate the document to them, the different areas we would explain. One area at a time is what we explained to them so they have an understanding.

We tell them what's in there. We review their concerns and then we develop an action plan based on the different areas of the IEP so that when they go to the meeting, they advocate based on the area. Let's say if it's goals, then these are the goals that they want the team to consider. If it's supplementary liaison services, then we discuss. We put down the points on the plan of what it is that

they want to request under supplementary agent services, under accommodations, even conference notes.

What the present levels of performance are? We ask them to write a statement about that and we'll help them do that and that's basically what we do to the IEP work group to help them compensate for the issues with language, the language barrier and then they take this action plan and they were able to advocate more effectively.

Andrea Pearce: Great. Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

Lauren Bustos-Alban: No, not at all. And we would have no issues sharing this information with you. If you would like a copy of our parenting skills checklist I can get that to you.

((Crosstalk))

Lauren Bustos-Alban: ...if it is something you would like to implement, use in any way.

Andrea Pearce: Yes. Thank you very much. Appreciate it.

Lauren Bustos-Alban: Okay.

Coordinator: Our next question comes from Ms. (Henny Beige). Your line is now open.

(Henny Beige): Thank you. I heard the (unintelligible) that there are no grants available right now that they're helping to get some more grants. I wish you would all consider the possibility of asking for grants to help other states to institute the same kind of program that you have there. I know we could desperately use it here in Oklahoma. Two-thirds of our children in Oklahoma are in Oklahoma

City and Tulsa so by dealing with those two school districts, you're getting - you're affecting two thirds of the kids.

So it would be pretty easy to improve the situation for our huge number of our Spanish-speaking kids in Oklahoma, you know, just by inviting two people to a conference where they have support and everything just (unintelligible) and they know what to do.

Lauren Bustos-Alban: Well, you know, I know that there - regardless of the grants and the competition that comes up with OSEP, I know there are. You know, you do have to do the research in regards to other grants and things that are available within your state and within your counties so - but putting that aside, even Parent to Parent of Miami did not start out with funding. It started out as a group of volunteers, a group of volunteers that grew in knowledge and was willing to share the knowledge with others.

And that's how it actually all started so what it really takes is a group of people who actually want to support the families and the community, work together and then from there, you will find the funding. Funding eventually comes when there's a group of people working together, you know, for the benefit of your community. And like I said, in regards to sharing information how we do things here, we have no issues in sharing that information if it will help you get something started or pointed in the right direction.

(Henny Beige): Okay. Thank you.

Coordinator: Our next question comes from Ms. (Bren Peters). Your line is now open.

(Bren Peters): Good afternoon. Thank you for taking my question. I'm just wondering how families can go about finding resources centers in their respective areas across

the country? I am, for example, right now on a Web site called that I think I got from one of your sites called parentsintheirhub.org and I know that in my community here in Connecticut in Bluefield, Connecticut that there is a parent resource center and I don't see it listed so can you address that question?

Isabel Garcia: This is Isabel Garcia and I'm the executive director of Parent to Parent of Miami the states are divided by regions so your state maybe in region 1 but if you're on the hub, you should be able to - or just had been the state and it should take you there.

Lauren Bustos-Alban: Now, also remember, the community parent resource centers are for certain counties. They serve certain counties but the PTI, the Parent and Information Training Center they serve the states so you may want to start by finding out who your PTI is and then work your way to if there are not a parent center in your area from there. I would usually tell people who call us from other states.

(Bren Peters): Okay. Thank you. That's helpful. Thank you very much.

Coordinator: Our next question comes from Ms. (Gloria). Your line is now open.

(Gloria): Hi. Thank you for taking my question. I just want to know how do you outreach to Hispanic families because like you mentioned, many of them are afraid to even come up because it may be because of the language or the immigration status. So what are some of the strategies that you use?

Lauren Bustos-Alban: Okay. You know, this has been something and it continues to be a work in progress. Over the years, we've gotten better and better at outreaching to the communities but one of the biggest things that we've done is that we

partnered. We've partnered with so many agencies within our community to get our information out that over time is finally paid off.

(Gloria): Okay.

Lauren Bustos-Alban: We have partnered with the school system. We have partnered with Early Steps. We have partnered with CMS, the Children's Medical Services. We - with private therapist, agencies, everything that you could possibly imagine in the community and that is how we have finally been able to get to the Hispanic community and get them to come here.

(Gloria): So it's pretty much thinking outside the box.

Lauren Bustos-Alban: And, of course, the children's trust that for us, you know, is huge and that's how we've outreached. You really have to go out there and talk to your community and the different agencies out there and it takes time and you have to be persistent.

(Gloria): Okay. Thank you. That was very helpful.

Coordinator: Our next question comes from (Lukia Arias). Your line is now open.

(Lukia Arias): Hello. Good afternoon. Thanks for taking my call. I'm calling you from New Jersey and a year ago, we had a family emergency and we wanted to move to Florida but I have very involved child and I started looking around for resources and schools and services and talking to parents mostly from Hispanic origin. They told me about the services (unintelligible) that we have to fight just put our children in good schools but we don't have transportation but we don't have nursing services.

And I thought carefully and I decided not to move. My question for you is that true. I mean I got information from...

((Crosstalk))

Lauren Bustos-Alban: Okay. To a certain extent, yes. To a certain extent. I'm not going to paint a pretty picture of Florida for you. I mean it's not as bad as to say we don't have transportation unless you're talking about public transportation because most people here in Florida drive and our public transportation is not good. I mean does Florida provide services? I'm going to say in Miami-Dade. Miami-Dade. Are there services? Yes.

Is it a struggle? Yes. It is. Is it impossible? No. It is not. A knowledgeable parent, you know, a parent that really does get involved advocates for the child usually will obtain exactly what their child needs but you are also in a state that has more money, better taxes. You know, you come to the south, where poorer states. You go to the north, your richer states.

So that is something that you do have to keep into account when considering a change.

(Lukia Arias): All right. Thank you so much.

Coordinator: Our next question comes from Ms. (Lisa Cooper). Your line is now open.

(Lisa Cooper): Thank you. I don't actually have a question. I work at the Center for Parent Information and Resources and the caller - several callers have asked how to find their parent center. You really can find your parent center on the hub, the parent center hub.

Lauren Bustos-Alban: Yes, you can. Well that's what we told her but in any case...

((Crosstalk))

Woman: She was having trouble.

Lauren Bustos-Alban: Trouble so I said, "Well, at least locate your PTI and then you can go from there but if you have a better - if you have a good explanation, go ahead.

(Lisa Cooper): If she goes to find your parent center page, all the states are listed alphabetically and if you just click on the name of your state, it will take you to - will drop you down and show you what your PTI is and/or the CPRC if there is one.

So I would urge her to try again

Lauren Bustos-Alban: Yeah. I think that her issue was that she knew she had a parent center in her area and that it wasn't listed.

(Lisa Cooper): For the woman who was calling from Oklahoma, she was upset because there's so many students that aren't getting served. She should definitely look at what information is on her Oklahoma PTI site because that can be - that will connect her with a web of other things that she can get involved in.

Anyway, that's - I just want to say that. Thanks.

Lauren Bustos-Alban: Thank you.

Coordinator: Our next question comes from Ms. (Elizabeth). Your line is now open.

(Elizabeth): Yes. Good afternoon. Thank you for taking my question. First of all, wonderful information. I wish this was around when I had a child going through elementary school but I'm an academic adviser at the university and I know this is also (unintelligible) at the elementary level and high school but where we're seeing a more and more students with disabilities coming to our universities and were at lost and because of (unintelligible) families are not - can't be as involved as they were at the elementary levels.

Any ideas, recommendations or suggestions?

Lauren Bustos-Alban: You know, that's something that we're looking at now too. We are partnering - we're actually partnering with FIU -- Florida International University here -- and looking into issues like that. We're very - right now, we're partnered in a project called (unintelligible) and finding the balance between supporting the students and yet communicating with the parents has been an issue.

I'm going to tell you that right now, I don't have great answers for you. I know that this is something that is coming up a lot and also we're looking at it if anything if you have an interest in it, you could get in touch because I can only talk about my community personally and you could get in touch with FIU. We could help you get in touch, have some conversations and talk to see what's going on right now in regards to that and how they're going about it and they're working it and integrating family and the student within their programs in the university.

(Elizabeth): Thank you.

Coordinator: And there are currently no more questions in queue.

Alejandra Ceja: Thank you. We are coming up against our time so I want to thank all of the folks that have called in who have - are viewing - we're able to view the slides on WebEx and I especially want to thank both our presenters for us with the White House Initiative on Education Excellence for Hispanics.

It's important to be able to highlight what's happening at the federal level and to be able to complement it with the good work that's happening on the ground level and communities across the country so Lauren, thank you so much for that great presentation and the information that you were able to share today.

If you still have a question for David or Lauren or you want to follow up, their contact information was on the presentation deck that we shared. I know some of you guys did not receive that but send us an email at whieeh@ed.gov and we will make sure to send you a copy of that presentation. So again, to our presenters, thank you so much for participating. We will be in touch soon with the next theme and details for the next monthly webinar.

If folks have recommendations for issues that they want us to highlight, please send us an email so I hope that you all have a great day. This concludes our webinar for today. Thank you.

Lauren Bustos-Alban: Thank you.

Coordinator: Thank you. This concludes today's conference. You may disconnect at this time.

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